

107/1404

REPORT  
OF  
*THE COMMITTEE*  
APPOINTED  
ON THE TWENTY-THIRD ULTIMO,  
TO WHOM WERE REFERRED  
THE LETTERS AND REPORTS  
FROM  
THE COMMISSIONERS UNDER THE ACT  
FOR THE  
*RELIEF OF THE REFUGEES*  
FROM THE  
BRITISH PROVINCES  
OF  
CANADA AND NOVA SCOTIA,  
MADE THE  
13th OF FEBRUARY, 1806.

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DECEMBER 22, 1807.

Read and referred to a committee of the whole house,  
to-morrow.

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CITY OF WASHINGTON:

A. & G. WAT, PRINTERS.

.....  
1807.

## REPORT.

*The committee to whom was referred two reports of the secretary of war, the secretary and comptroller of the treasury, commissioners under the act of congress passed the 7th of April, 1798, intituled, "An act for the relief of the refugees from the British provinces of Canada and Nova Scotia,"*

### REPORT....

THAT, when the American people formed the intention of throwing off their allegiance to the king of Great Britain, and to establish an independent government, they contemplated including those of the provinces of Canada and Nova Scotia, as well as those of the other states, and with this view, endeavored to unite the people of those provinces in the common cause.

No doubt, from a persuasion that the whole would stand or fall together, a number of the inhabitants of those provinces, which were, for the most part of the revolutionary war, in the possession of the enemy, abandoned their homes, fled to the other states, and joined their efforts with the friends of the revolution.

That when peace was concluded in 1783, and the independence of these states acknowledged by Great Britain, those provinces were not included, but left under the power of the British king, and consequent-

ly the property of all such as had taken a part against him in the war was of course confiscated.

That congress, from a just sense of the distressed situation of those who had emigrated from these provinces to join the standard of American freedom, and thereby had provoked the vengeance of their king, did, by a resolution the same year peace was concluded, pledge the faith of the nation to remunerate, by a grant of land, these people for their losses and sufferings.

That nothing further, however, was done respecting it, under the old confederated government, nor until 1798, when an act was passed setting apart a tract of land, for the purpose of compensating those sufferers, prescribing the mode in which proof of their services, sacrifices, and sufferings should be exhibited, and appointing the secretary of war, the secretary and comptroller of the treasury, commissioners to examine those claims, and report on the same to congress, allowing to those of the first class, a quantity, not exceeding one thousand acres, and to the last class a quantity not exceeding one hundred, making such intermediate classes as the resolutions aforesaid, and distributive justice might, in their judgment, require; and that in case any such claimant should have sustained such losses and sufferings, or performed such services for the United States, that he could not justly be classed in any one general class, a separate report should be made of his circumstances, together with the quantity of land that ought to be allowed him, having reference to the foregoing rates. The period for exhibiting such claims was by this act limited to two years; but, by another act of March 6, 1804, the first mentioned act was revived and continued in force for two years.

Under these acts the said commissioners have made the two reports in question, one in favor of the following persons, to wit: The widow of the late general Moses Hazen 1,600 acres; Elijah Ayre, sen. 1,000

acres; Elijah Ayre, jun. 320 acres, and Anthony Buck 250 acres, all of which are included in one general report. The other report in favor of two others, to wit : Chloe Shannon, the wife of James Noble Shannon, and relict of Obadiah Ayre, deceased, 1,280 acres, and James Ruland 960 acres, also in one general report, without, in either of the two reports, any specification of the particular circumstances attending the two cases, in which the claimants are allowed more than 1,000 acres each.

Upon a view of these facts, the committee doubt whether it will be consistent with the provisions of the said act, or a due exercise of that discretion which seems thereby to have been reserved to congress, under a view of the special circumstances of the case, when spread before them by a special report of the commissioners, to allow to any one claimant a larger quantity than 1,000 acres, when no such special report has been made in his favor.

Being however of opinion, that the aforesaid report furnished sufficient evidence that the two persons to whom more than one thousand acres are allowed, are fairly entitled to, at least 1,000 acres each, being the greatest quantity which the commissioners could allow to any one claimant in such general report: the committee therefore submit a bill, conformably to that opinion, and confirming the grants to the other claimants agreeably to the said reports.